

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to S. T. Walker, May 6, 1892, with transcript

Certify: Please put on file in W.B. Bellevue Hotel 414 Boston Mass. May 6th. 1892. My dear Mr. Walker:

Your note of April 23rd. has been forwarded to me here. I am much interested in your "stream of language" idea, and think it perfectly feasible. I was much pleased also with your former idea of utilizing the se? of touch of your pupils by an electrical apparatus.

It seems to me from the few conversations that we have had that your is full of remarkably fertile in ideas that might prove of great value to the deaf. The great trouble however is that you expect other people to carry into execution instead of working them out yourself. This is a great mistake will never lead to satisfactory results.

In order to make your ideas of value to the deaf you must carry them out yourself . Disembodied ideas are of little practical value until they are ma?ized, and no one is so capable of superintending the construction of the ins?ralities necessary to give them effect as the inventor himself. No one has the same interest and motive that he has.

There is a great difference between the first conception of an idea and the actual realization of it. Other teachers in other schools would no doubt interested in reading an account of your idea, but that alone wouldn't lead them to carry it into effect: that alone would not satisfy their minds, and convince them of the value of your thought. What they want is to see the thing work . No one will try it before you do. I f you try it and it is successful then every one will want to have it. The moral I want to hammer home is this: Go ahead and ma? the apparatus yourself and don't rely upon me or any one else to make it or you will be disappointed. I have no doubt that the pupils of your industrial development could make the apparatus at a slight cost, but if not and you can make an estimate of what

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it would cost you to construct the machine I would be happy to submit the matter to the trustees of the Volta Bureau. The income of the Bureau is devoted to "The increase and diffusion of knowledge relating to the deaf" and I think it would be a very proper thing for the Bureau to grant occasional appropriations in aid of original research and invention for the benefit of the deaf.

If you will go ahead and make the apparatus, and submit the estimate of cost to me — if in my opinion the amount is not too large. I would recommend bring the matter to the attention of the Bureau with a favorable recommendation for an appropriation.

Yours very sincerely, (signed) Alexander Graham Bell P.S. Always glad to hear from you.
S.T.Walker, Esq.